

CITY OF MUSKEGON
PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES

March 16, 2017

Chairman T. Michalski called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and roll was taken.

MEMBERS PRESENT: F. Peterson, J. Doyle, T. Michalski, E. Hood, J. Montgomery-Keast, M. Hovey-Wright

MEMBERS ABSENT: B. Mazade, excused; B. Larson, excused; S. Gawron

STAFF PRESENT: M. Franzak, D. Renkenberger, J. Pesch

OTHERS PRESENT: T. McKittrick, Forsite Group; J. Wilson, Muskegon County Economic Development

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion that the minutes of the regular meeting of February 16, 2017 be approved was made by J. Montgomery-Keast, supported by J. Doyle and unanimously approved.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

M. Franzak introduced the 3 public hearing cases, which were all staff-initiated requests to amend the R-1 Single Family Residential zoning district. He explained what the proposed amendments would accomplish. The cases are listed separately below.

Hearing, Case 2017-03: Staff-initiated request to amend Article IV (R-1, Single Family Residential Districts) to rename it R-1, Single Family Low Density Residential Districts. M. Franzak stated that the purpose of the proposals was to amend the single family zoning ordinance to allow smaller urban lots to be buildable rather than remaining vacant.

City staff held two public workshops regarding the small lot zoning and downtown multi-family zoning proposals. The small lot zoning proposal was very well received; however, there were concerns over the multi-family zoning, so staff is working on revisions and plans to request those amendments at the April 13 Planning Commission meeting. The reason for these three amendments is to allow each specific residential block to be developed in the same manner in which it was created. Many homes in the downtown area are built on 33-foot wide lots, but the current zoning ordinance requires that lots be 50 feet wide to be buildable. This limits development and creates many non-conforming lots. Many lots in the Nims and Beachwood-Bluffton neighborhoods are just over 40 feet wide, but development is again limited because of non-conformities. The first hearing (case 2017-03) is to rename R-1, Single-Family Residential Districts to R-1, Single Family Low Density Residential Districts. This will only change the name of the zoning district; it will not change any of the regulations on parcels with this designation. Buildable lots in this district will still require 50 feet of street frontage.

M. Hovey-Wright asked if the concerns brought up at the public input sessions had been addressed. M. Franzak stated that the issue of missing middle homes had been postponed, and that was where most of the concerns arose. He was working on a scaled-down version to present to the Planning

Commission at a future meeting. M. Hovey-Wright asked which areas were being considered for multi-family housing. M. Franzak stated that they were still exploring possibilities but were considering the area of Webster and Muskegon Avenues near 8th and 9th Streets. J. Doyle asked how many of the currently unbuildable lots would become buildable if the zoning modifications were approved. J. Pesch had worked on the mapping for the lots and explained the map key, which showed the various unbuildable lots in the downtown area. M. Franzak stated that the zoning amendments would only affect properties in the downtown target area at first, but lots in other neighborhoods could benefit in future changes. Informational handouts related to the residential amendments were provided to board members.

A motion to close the public hearing on case 2017-03 was made by J. Doyle, supported by E. Hood and unanimously approved.

Hearing, Case 2017-04: Staff-initiated request to amend Article IV (R-1, Single Family Residential Districts) to create two new categories for single family districts. These will include R-2, Single Family Medium Density Residential Districts and R-3, Single Family High Density Residential Districts. This request is to create two new zoning districts to go in Article IV along with R-1 districts. These will be R-2, Single Family Medium Density Residential Districts, and R-3, Single Family High Density Residential Districts. The uses for all three districts will be the same. The only thing that will be different is the area and bulk requirements. None of these requests will result in a rezoning for any property. Staff will request the rezoning of certain properties to R-2, R-3 and Urban Residential at a future meeting. All affected property owners will be properly notified before the meeting.

Hearing no further questions, a motion to close the public hearing for case 2017-04 was made by E. Hood, supported by F. Peterson and unanimously approved.

Hearing, Case 2017-05: Staff-initiated request to amend Article IV (R-1, Single Family Residential Districts) to amend the preamble to reflect the changes made by adding the new residential districts; to amend Sections 400 (Principal Uses Permitted) and Section 401 (Special Land Uses Permitted) to create the allowed and special uses permitted in the new residential districts; and to amend Section 404 (Area and Bulk Requirements) to create the development standards for the new residential districts. This request is to modify the wording in Article IV to reflect the new zoning regulations. This will include changes to Sections 400, 401 and 404.

Hearing no further questions, a motion to close the public hearing on case 2017-05 was made by M. Hovey-Wright, supported by F. Peterson and unanimously approved.

A motion that the three requests listed below be recommended for approval to the City Commission was made by J. Doyle, supported by J. Montgomery-Keast and unanimously approved, with F. Peterson, J. Doyle, T. Michalski, E. Hood, J. Montgomery-Keast, and M. Hovey-Wright voting aye.

- 1) Amend Article IV (R-1, Single Family Residential Districts) to rename it R-1, Single Family Low Density Residential Districts,
- 2) Amend Article IV of the zoning ordinance to create two new categories for single family districts: R-2, Single Family Medium Density Residential Districts and R-3, Single Family High Density Residential Districts, and
- 3) Amend Article IV to amend the preamble to reflect the changes made by adding the new residential districts; to amend Sections 400 and Section 401 to create the allowed and special uses permitted in the new residential districts; and to amend Section 404 to create the development standards for the new residential districts

NEW BUSINESS

None

OLD BUSINESS

WI-PUD zoning district amendment (Case 2016-19) – M. Franzak and F. Peterson updated board members on this case, which was originally presented at the December 2016 meeting. Staff had requested that the Planning Commission recommend City Commission approval of amendments to the WI-PUD zoning district at the east end of Muskegon Lake. That case had not yet been approved by City Commission, as further discussion had taken place with interested parties. Staff now requested that the Planning Commission consider rescinding their recommendation. F. Peterson stated that the City had obtained additional information on the party interested in purchasing the site and what their intentions were, and wished to keep the lines of communication open with prospective buyers. J. Doyle asked if all parties involved had been invited to make comments. F. Peterson stated that they had. T. McKittrick discussed his interest in the property and concurred with F. Peterson regarding ongoing dialogue.

Board members discussed their recommendation. A motion to rescind the Planning Commission's prior recommendation that the City Commission approve the amendments to the WI-PUD District was made by E. Hood, supported by J. Montgomery-Keast and unanimously approved, with F. Peterson, J. Doyle, T. Michalski, E. Hood, J. Montgomery-Keast, and M. Hovey-Wright voting aye.

OTHER

Urban residential zoning. M. Franzak stated that he continued to work on this issue, and planned to present information to the Planning Commission in the near future.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:33 p.m.